New Nouveau Brunswick

Together We Thrive

Department of Social Development

Strategic Plan 2016-2021

Together We Thrive
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Together We Thrive

Department of Social Development

Strategic Plan 2016-2021

Acknowledgements

Members of the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee:

Janet Thomas
Director of Nursing Homes Services

Marc Gagnon
Director of Provincial Program Delivery

Marlien McKay
Director of Wellness

Diane Caissie
Alignment Champion

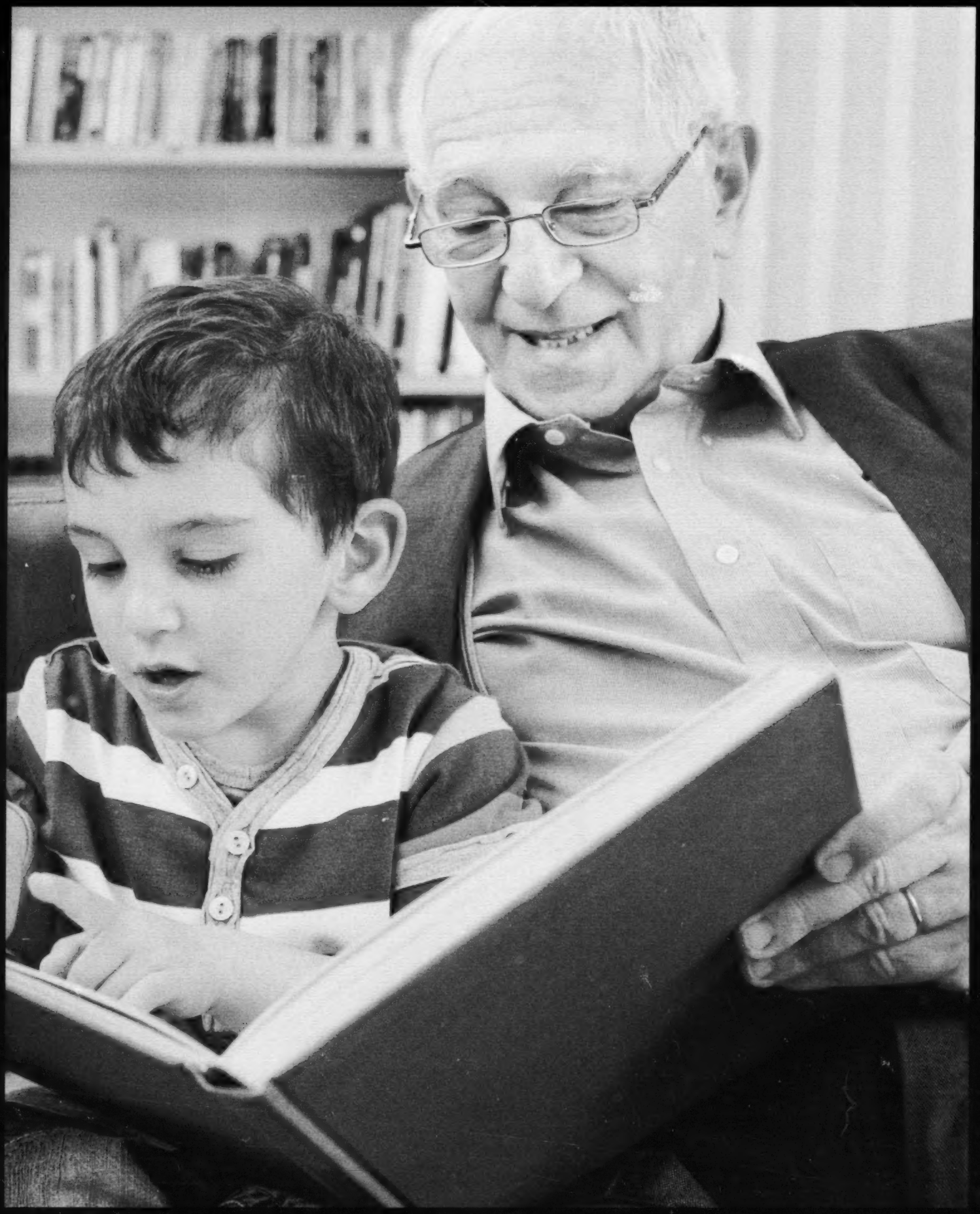
Kelly Rodgers-Sturgeon
Director of Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities

Robert Morimanno
Manager with Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities

Angela Violette
Corporate Planner with Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities

Jennifer LeJeune
Communications with Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities

It is appropriate to give credit to the Department of Justice and Public Safety for providing the strategic and business plan framework that our department has used to develop this five-year plan and accountability framework.



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Message from the Minister of Families and Children

I am very proud to serve as the Minister of Families and Children responsible for child welfare and youth services, income security, housing and wellness.

Healthy families help build a strong province and a strong workforce. As a department, we will continue to build a culture of wellness for families and New Brunswickers of all ages.

We will work to renew the Canada-New Brunswick Affordable Housing Agreement to create more opportunities for families to maintain a home.

We will also amend the *Family Services Act* to help improve the delivery of our service to New Brunswick families, children and youth across our province.

I am pleased to be given this opportunity to serve as your Minister and support the department's new strategic plan, *Together We Thrive.* It is with our collective effort that we will reach our goal to make New Brunswick the best place to raise a family.

Minister Lisa Harris and I are privileged to lead the department as we tackle the crucial responsibility of helping the most vulnerable in our province. As your Minister, I will be dedicated to helping families, children and youth succeed and reach their potential.

Honourable Stephen Horsman
Minister of Families and Children

Message from the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care

It is a great honour for me to serve as the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care with additional responsibilities for New Brunswick's Council on Aging.

I have been entrusted with the important duty to serve the people in New Brunswick and do my best to make life better for all seniors in our province.

As a department, we will work to bring forward long-term care legislation and implement a new aging strategy as recommended by the Council on Aging.

We will continue to support wellness, and active living for seniors as well as home support service for seniors as part of the *Home First* strategy. We will work to promote the role of long-term care facilities in our communities and the services they provide and make inspection reports for these facilities public.

I am excited to be your champion and Minister as we implement our department's new strategic plan, *Together We Thrive*. I believe that by using this plan as our guide, we will continue to support our seniors and those in need.

Minister Stephen Horsman and I are privileged to lead the crucial responsibility of looking after our province's most vulnerable persons to improve quality of life for all New Brunswickers and move our province forward.

Honourable Lisa Harris
Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care

Message from the Deputy Minister

It is a privilege to have this opportunity to introduce our new strategic plan – *Together We Thrive*. Building on the success of your efforts under our previous strategy (Appendix 1), *Together We Thrive* sets a course for the future with a clear focus on our new vision:

The Department of Social Development fosters social innovation through efficient and effective programs built on a foundation of respectful and caring relationships and a network of community partnerships that contribute to a safe, secure and healthy New Brunswick where individuals, families and communities have opportunities to thrive.

Our strategic plan sets the course for future action by identifying four strategic goals: **client services; people excellence; innovation;** and **partnerships.** These goals represent the broad objectives that we must continue to pursue to realize our vision. To complement and put our strategy into operation, we will shortly release the *Department of Social Development Annual Business Plan*. While our strategic plan describes "where we are going," our business plan describes "how we will get there." In other words, our business plan is all about execution. Aligned with government priorities and flowing from our strategic plan, our business plan identifies our annual corporate, regional and branch priorities and assigns resources accordingly. In doing so, the business plan enables alignment while providing a baseline for measurement and reporting through an enhanced accountability framework to ensure that we remain focused on execution.

I encourage you to become familiar with both our strategy and our business plan as they will impact what you do and how you do it. More importantly, I encourage you to stay engaged and to continue to contribute to the collective efforts of the department – only together will we continue to deliver excellent service to New Brunswickers and only together will we succeed in realizing our vision.

Finally, I wish to thank each of you for what you do and how you do it. Each thing that you do contributes to enabling a safe, secure and healthy New Brunswick where individuals, families and communities have opportunities to thrive – you can be justifiably proud of the work you do each day to support the residents of our province. It is a privilege to work with you, and I look forward to continuing our important work together.

L. Craig Dalton
Deputy Minister of Social Development

Introducing the new strategy and integrated business planning model

The Department of Social Development's strategic plan for 2016 – 2021, *Together We Thrive,* is as much about process as it is outcome. That is, not only does the strategy describe our shared vision and supporting strategic goals, it also provides us with a framework – an integrated planning model – through which we can plan, execute and measure our success. This strategy is not an end; but rather, the beginning of a dynamic process meant to engage all employees as we pursue our vision through the pursuit of strategic objectives that will enable us to achieve excellence, while responding to the ever-present change that exists in our external and internal environments.

Together We Thrive is ambitious and is being released at a time when we face, among others, the challenge of reconciling continued fiscal constraint with increased demand for quality services. To pursue our vision and to meet this and other challenges, we have identified four strategic goals that will enable us to prioritize our efforts and focus our limited resources on activities that add value. The strategic goals that will guide our efforts are: **client services, people excellence, innovation** and **partnerships.**

As part of our integrated planning model, we have developed and will introduce a departmental business plan for 2016-2017. The annual plan identifies and tracks the progress of key initiatives and projects that align with our strategic goals in support of our vision. The first plan, which includes performance measures and Key Performance Indicators, will be supported by an accountability framework to ensure that we identify, remain focused on, and deliver on our priority initiatives.

As an organization, we can be proud of the daily contributions we make to the province and to its residents. We should also be proud of the progress we have made, and continue to make, as a department. This strategy seeks to build on that progress by continuing our journey to pursue both performance excellence and people excellence.

Our vision

The Department of Social Development fosters **social innovation** through **efficient and effective programs**, built on a foundation of respectful and **caring relationships** and a network of community **partnerships** that contribute to a safe, secure and healthy New Brunswick where individuals, families and communities have opportunities to thrive.

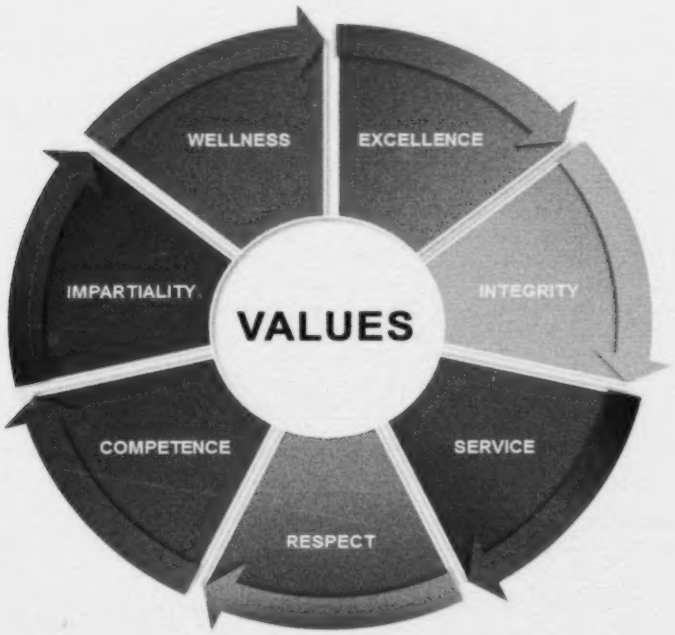
Our mission

Provide greater independence, an improved quality of life and protection for those in need.

Our values

Our strategic goals will be achieved through the talent, creativity and commitment of staff who demonstrate our seven values.

Employees of the department will continue to be supported and encouraged to reflect these values in how they think about and perform their day-to-day work. These values stand as our commitment to the people of New Brunswick and to each other. We recognize that public service, by its very nature, demands a high standard.



Integrity

We will act honestly, fairly and openly; we will honour our commitments; we will not use public office for personal gain.

Service

We will provide effective service to the public that is timely, competent, fair and efficient.

Respect

We will treat one another and all New Brunswickers with respect by ensuring fairness. By upholding the merit principle, supporting diversity, valuing workplace health and safety, we ensure that we are free from discrimination and harassment.

Competence

We will strengthen our own capabilities and foster the professional development of other public servants so as to serve the government and the public.

Impartiality

We will act objectively, professionally and lawfully,
and with respect for the authority of the government.

These public service values have been fundamental to our success. They remind us that we value not only results, but also, how we achieve those results. For that reason, our continued success depends on each one of us doing our part to uphold these values in our day-to-day work.

To highlight the importance of focusing and placing a priority on both people excellence and performance excellence, Together We Thrive *introduces two additional values to the department. They are wellness and excellence.*

Wellness

We will foster a culture that values and invests in our people
and achieves balance between our personal lives and our work.

Excellence

We will work together for excellence in the public service. We will value and encourage each other's innovation, creativity and contribution.

Together We Thrive strategic goals

To pursue our vision in a focused manner, we have identified four strategic goals. They are:

1. ***Enhance excellence in client services***

   We will efficiently deliver effective, evidence-informed programs and services.

2. ***Foster a culture of people excellence***

   We will increase supportive conditions and reduce barriers to enhance engagement and promote wellness for all employees.

3. ***Foster a culture of innovation***

   We will foster a culture of innovation.

4. ***Develop and grow partnerships***

   We will increase the number of departmental partnerships.

Strategic goal 1: Enhance excellence in client services

We will efficiently deliver effective, evidence-informed programs and services.

The Department of Social Development has a history of excellence in service delivery, continuous improvement and in the development of sustainable programs and services – our *"raison d'être."* By offering the right programs and services to our clients, we create the conditions for individuals, families and communities to thrive. This must remain our primary goal.

While the number of clients we serve is increasing, so too is case complexity and all at a time when we continue to confront resource constraints across the department. At the same time, our clients expect and deserve high quality, customized services. Clients also want easy to access face-to-face and online service options available to them 24 hours a day. While we strive to meet our clients' expectations, we must also remain mindful that we need to do so in a sustainable manner.

During the next five years, we will strive for excellence in service delivery, through innovation, by improving the quality of our programs and services in a sustainable, consistent manner. We will continue to employ an evidence-based approach to program design through expanded partnerships with all levels of government, as well as stakeholders in the not-for-profit and private sectors. Finally, we will continue to develop and implement integrated services wherever and whenever possible.

Strategic goal 2: Foster a culture of people excellence

We will increase supportive conditions and reduce barriers to enhance engagement and promote wellness for all employees.

The Department of Social Development is committed to fostering a culture of people excellence that enables employees to be at their best. In today's work environment of increasing complexity and demand, we recognize that good leadership and employee engagement are critical to individual, team, and organizational success and this in turn has a positive impact on our families and communities. A people excellence culture promotes wellness in our employees and partners, invests in employees to provide excellent service delivery and supports internal employee collaboration. Indeed, we have made significant strides to develop these areas in recent years through the implementation of people excellence committees, the *Healthy Workplace Framework* and other mechanisms.

We must continue to place particular emphasis on our positive workplace initiatives. More specifically, we must set clear workplace objectives and measures through our integrated planning process; and hold ourselves accountable for results. While a collective effort is required to achieve each of the strategic goals outlined in this strategy, this goal, more than any other, demands a consistent and dedicated effort from each and every one of us.

During the next five years we will continue to build on our people excellence efforts to guide employee engagement and make the department an even better performing organization. This will include a three-year positive workplace initiative to enhance employee engagement and wellness across the department.

Strategic goal 3: Foster a culture of innovation

We will foster a culture of innovation.

Innovation is critical to the continuing success of any organization particularly in dynamic environments characterized by frequent or consistent change – we live and work in such an environment and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. An innovative organization is one that openly embraces new ideas, processes, practices, services, and technologies that enable the organization to respond effectively to change and to continue to achieve organizational success. Innovative organizations create the conditions that enable innovation. It takes more than words to enable initiative, creativity and risk-taking across an organization. It takes deliberate thought and action to create a culture that empowers staff to be innovative and creative, allows them to take risks and ensures that their much needed ideas are made known.

During the next five years, the Department of Social Development will continue to work towards building a culture of innovation by taking deliberate steps through our management practices to create the conditions for innovation. While we cannot mandate innovation, we can create opportunities for it to take root by leveraging our efforts to implement the GNB Formal Management System, and the practice of Daily Management as an example, and by introducing the "excellence team" concept. Both of these practices recognize that innovation and creativity exist at all levels of the organization and, more importantly, that the vast majority of good ideas come from our front-line staff who actually deliver the services to our clients on a daily basis. To be successful as an organization, we need to ensure that these ideas see the light of day.

Strategic goal 4: Develop and grow partnerships

We will increase the number of departmental partnerships.

The Department of Social Development has long recognized the importance of partnerships in both the successful design and delivery of services to New Brunswickers. Partnerships can take many forms. Internal partnerships might include collaboration between branches or regions, divisions, departments, and/or other levels of government (municipal, provincial, federal and territorial). External partnerships can include collaboration with client groups, advocates, associations, service providers, universities, research institutes, for-profit and not-for profit entities.

Today, we continue to work with a wide variety of partners, in both the public and not-for-profit sectors, to leverage each other's ideas, resources and service delivery expertise to deliver collectively what we might not be able to do individually. Indeed, it is this collective capacity and notion that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts that drives us to seek more partnerships more often.

As resource pressures persist, we must be even more deliberate in our efforts to seek and establish partnerships that will enable us to better design and better deliver our programs and services. We must also recognize the emergence of new, and very capable participants, in the social problem solving space and seize opportunities to partner where and when it makes sense to do so. Social innovation labs and social research organizations that are taking advantage of the opportunity to gather and analyze ever-increasing volumes of data for use in policy development are just some examples of where we might wish to focus our partnering efforts.

During the next five years, we will continue to nurture existing partnerships and deliberately seek to grow our network of partners at all levels of the organization. From a policy and program design perspective, we will seek to expand our cooperative approach by specifically focusing our efforts on partnering with non-government organizations involved in complex social problem solving and social policy development. We will examine whether it might be possible to do so in concert with our Atlantic partners. From a service delivery perspective, we will continue to pursue and enhance partnerships to more efficiently deliver quality services recognizing that wherever and whenever possible, we need to leverage each other's expertise and capacity to deliver quality services to our clients.

Monitoring and evaluating the strategy

The strategic plan is monitored monthly and reported on quarterly through the new integrated business planning cycle currently being introduced to the department. The annual business plan document integrates the strategic plan goals and government direction in a coordinated effort – it describes **how we will get there.** It does so by assigning resources to strategic goals and objectives. It will also ensure that our efforts are aligned with objectives formally assigned to the Department through Ministerial and other mandate letters. Finally, and most importantly, the integrated business planning cycle includes an accountability framework that will enable us to employ measures and Key Performance Indicators to track progress and re-align efforts where required.

Appendix 1

Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017 wrap up

Goal	Priorities	Initiatives	Results
1 Enhanced quality of life	Improve the success rate of people leaving social assistance.	Achieve a net reduction of 1,600 cases under current funding.	Goal achieved ✓
	Increase the number of clients who complete the career development and employment counselling services.	Increase and maintain the number of clients referred to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour by 20 per cent.	Goal achieved ✓
	Focus on strengthening the accuracy of the needs assessment.	Reduce the number of appeals and administrative reviews.	The current number of appeals indicates a healthy appeal process. ✓
	Improve client's access and consistency of Department of Social Development.	Reduce the wait time at screening and intake for initial services by 20 per cent. Provide consistency in intake services.	Goal achieved ✓ Goal achieved ✓
	Develop and implement the new regime for persons with disabilities to increase supports.	Increase integrated supports for persons with disabilities.	Goal achieved ✓

2 Living within our means	Develop innovative services to maintain seniors in their home longer.	Increase the number of seniors receiving community based home support services.	Goal achieved ✓
	Reduce the rise in costs so we are able to provide more seniors with required services to meet the rising demand.	Reduce the senior long-term care cost per case by 10 per cent.	Goal achieved ✓
	Reduce the cost required to meet clients' needs by making our processes more effective and efficient.	Reduce the cost per case by 10 per cent.	Goal achieved ✓
	Increase the consistency of our program policies and standards within and between regions.	Have 100 per cent compliance to standards and policies.	Work continues on this initiative.
	Support major programs with performance data and information.	100 per cent coverage of program and information needs.	Work continues on this initiative.

3 Organizational readiness	Embed and execute strategy at the operational level.	Have a completion rate of 90 per cent for initiatives and operational target.	Goal achieved ✓
	Reliable use of the Performance Management system.	90 per cent compliance of the Performance Management tools.	Goal achieved ✓
	Improve engagement through change management and enhanced communication.	Improve scores on the New Brunswick Public Service Employee Survey.	Goal achieved ✓